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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 4068th meeting of the Security Council, held on 12 November 1999 in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Burundi", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council notes with concern the recent outbreaks of violence in Burundi and the delays in the peace process. It calls on all the parties to put an end to this violence and pursue negotiations towards the peaceful resolution of Burundi's ongoing crisis.

"The Security Council reiterates its support for the Arusha Peace Process and for the efforts to build an internal political partnership in Burundi. It notes with great sadness the death of Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, while at the same time rededicating its efforts to the cause of peace he served. The Council firmly believes that the process chaired by the late Mwalimu Nyerere offers the best hope for peace in Burundi and should be the foundation for all-party talks leading to the conclusion of a peace agreement. The States of the region, in close consultation with the United Nations, need to act quickly to appoint a new mediation team that is acceptable to the Burundian parties to the negotiations.

"The Security Council commends those Burundian parties, including the Government, that demonstrated their commitment to continue negotiations, calls on those parties that remain outside the process to cease hostilities and calls for their full participation in Burundi's inclusive peace process.

"The Security Council condemns the murder of United Nations personnel in Burundi in October. It calls on the Government to undertake and cooperate with investigations, and for the perpetrators to be brought to justice. The Council urges all parties to ensure the safe and unhindered access of humanitarian assistance to those in need in Burundi and to guarantee fully the security and freedom of movement of United Nations and humanitarian personnel. The Council recognizes the important role of the States of the region, in particular Tanzania, which is host to hundreds of thousands of Burundian refugees and home to the Julius Nyerere Foundation, which has provided outstanding support to the talks.

"The Security Council calls on States of the region to ensure the neutrality and civilian character of refugee camps and to prevent the use of their territory by armed insurgents. It also calls on the Government of Burundi to halt the policy of forced regroupment and to allow the affected people to return to their homes, with full and unhindered humanitarian access throughout the process. It condemns the attacks by armed groups against civilians and calls for an end to these unacceptable incidents.

"The Security Council recognizes Burundi's dire economic and social conditions and affirms the need for the donor community to expand assistance for Burundi."